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Required Report - public distribution

Date: 9/23/2009

GAIN Report Number: E49067

Spain EU-27

EU-27 STONE FRUIT ANNUAL

2009

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Report Highlights:

EU-27 production of peaches and nectarines in MY 2009/10 is estimated at 4.2 million MT. Favorable weather conditions during blooming and maturation resulted in a slight harvest increase for the EU-27 as compared to the previous MY. Quality is reported as good in most Member States. Total cherry production in MY 2009/10 is expected at 634,000 MT, an increase over the previous MY, due to good crops in Spain and Germany.

Executive Summary

Disclaimer: This report presents the situation and outlook for stone fruit including peaches, nectarines and cherries in the EU-27. The report presents the views of the authors and does not reflect the official view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The data are not official USDA data.

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Abbreviations and definitions used in this report

GTA Global Trade Atlas

Ha hectare; 1 ha = 2.471 acres

HS Code Harmonized System codes for commodity classification used to calculate trade

data.

Peaches and nectarines HS Code 080930 Cherries HS Code 080920

MT Metric ton = 1,000 kg MS EU member state(s)

MY Marketing year: January/December

Commodities:

Fresh Peaches & Nectarines

Production

The main EU-27 producers of peaches are Italy, Spain, Greece and France. There is also limited production in other EU MS, including Hungary and Bulgaria. While Italy stands out as the largest producer, Spain is the major exporter due to its early season harvest. Greece is the major EU peach processor.

Commercial peach and nectarine production in MY 2009/10 for the EU-27 is estimated at 4.2 million MT. Favorable weather conditions during blooming and maturation resulted in a slight increase in the peach harvest in Europe as compared to the previous MY. Fruit quality is reported as good in most MS. Production in the main producing countries is indicated below.

Major EU Producers of Peaches and Nectarines by Volume in MT

COUNTRY	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09	MY 2009/10
Italy	1,630,400	1,519,787	1,573,411
Spain	1,159,300	1,298,700	1,305,300
Greece	880,000	867,000	900,000
France	357,763	301,146	326,000

Source: FAS Europe offices

Italian peach production in MY 2009/10 is expected to be 4 percent greater than last year, recovering from MY 2008/2009 crop losses resulting from adverse weather in spring 2008. This slight increase over 2008 is the combined result of a generally stable crop in the southern regions and expanded production in both central and northern Italy due to a return to more normal weather conditions in spring 2009. The breakdown of production by major varietal groups in MT follows:

Varietal Group	2008	2009
Peaches for fresh consumption	683,368	695,653
Clingstone peaches	90,760	101,366
Nectarines	745,658	776,392

Clingstone peaches are mainly, if not exclusively, sold to the processing and canning industry.

In Italy, more than half of total peach production is grown in two regions, Emilia-Romagna and Campania, with the remainder mainly concentrated in the south. Despite a

less favorable climate, the northern region and parts of the central region have a more robust export-oriented marketing system. In the south, where the climate is more favorable for peach production, the marketing infrastructure is less organized in terms of successfully transporting this highly perishable product to its destination.

In Spain, the latest forecast from official sources estimates MY 2009/10 peach and nectarine production at 1,305,300 MT, just slightly above the previous year's production. Favorable conditions during blooming and maturation resulted in good crop forecasts for the current marketing year for quantity, quality and size.

Among the stone fruits grown in Spain, the largest acreage is dedicated to peaches. About one-third of Spain's total fruit production, excluding citrus, is represented by peaches and nectarines. Approximately 80 percent of the total acreage in Spain planted to peaches and nectarines is concentrated in four regions: Catalonia, Murcia, Aragon and Andalusia. Peach orchards planted to varieties with reduced winter chilling requirements have been extended to southern regions where the risk of frost is lower. Peaches are harvested in Spain from April until November.

As for Greece, production is expected to be high, reaching up to 900,000 MT, with good quality. The breakdown of production by major varietal groups is as follows: 252,000 MT of fresh peaches, 98,000 MT of nectarines and 550,000 MT of clingstone peaches.

In France, the harvest is forecast to increase to 326,000 tons in MY 2009/10. In 2008, the peach and nectarine harvest declined by 16 percent as compared to 2007, due to adverse weather conditions including hail and heavy rains. As a result, French imports of peaches and nectarines increased by 20 percent over the previous year.

Processing

Products of peach processing include canned peaches, juice, preserves and other bakery products. The volume of peaches intended for processing differs significantly among MS and from year to year, as it is strongly dependent on price, quality and demand. Fresh peaches almost always command a premium price relative to that offered by processors. Consequently, robust demand in both domestic and export fresh markets result in fewer peaches destined for processing.

The major MS canned peach processors remain Spain and Greece.

Consumption

Consumer preferences vary within the different MS. For instance, in Spain, consumption of peaches is declining in favor of other fruits. Most peaches are consumed fresh in the domestic market while only about 30 percent of Spain's production is processed. In Italy, domestic peach consumption remains steady, following a decline in the first half of

this decade. However, nectarines are increasing in market share as they become more favored by Italian consumers.

In France, peaches and nectarines are the most popular fruits consumed in France, following apples. In 2008, sales increased 5.3 percent by volume, despite a price increase of 12.3 percent as compared to 2007.

Bulgarian peach farmers sell the majority of their produce within the domestic market. Fresh consumption remains limited, price sensitive, and highly unstable, depending principally on local availability. Consumption is concentrated during the production season as Bulgaria's marketing infrastructure remains underdeveloped and limited consumer income does not favor imports of higher priced out-of-season fruit.

The stone fruit sector is cautious regarding the effects of the current financial crisis on consumption levels. Producers fear that economic uncertainty coupled with high unemployment and lower purchasing power will lead consumers to buy fewer fresh fruits and vegetables.

Trade

The EU is a net exporter of peaches -- with exports largely exceeding imports. Most trade occurs within the EU. The main customers of the major producing countries are other Member States.

Imports

As indicated in the table below, the main supplier of peaches to the EU is Chile, accounting for 40 percent of total imports in MY 2008/09. More than half of total imports are sourced in the southern hemisphere and are exported during the European off-season. The major EU peach importers are Germany and France.

EU-27 Imports of Peaches and Nectarines by Origin in MT

Country of Origin	MY 2006/07	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09
Chile	11,269	16,765	16,445
Turkey	5,605	2,681	4,492
South Africa	4,571	4,878	4,418
Serbia	147	3,430	3,382
Morocco	3,388	3,426	-
Argentina	3,267	3,889	2,586
Others	1,296	1,003	448
TOTAL IMPORTS	40,307	41,772	39,640

Source: GTA

Exports

The main destinations for EU-27 peaches are Russia, Switzerland and Ukraine. The largest exporters outside of the EU in MY 2008/09 were Spain (to Russia and Switzerland), Italy (to Switzerland and Russia) and Greece (to Russia and Ukraine).

The EU's major producers compete for sales within the European market. Thanks to an earlier harvesting period, Spain dominates the European market in May-June. During this period, there are also substantial shipments of Spanish peaches to its major EU competitor -- Italy -- as well.

The importance of exports for the Spanish peach sector is increasing. During the summer, exports of Italian peaches remain strong; however, Spanish market share continues to rise. As for Greece, exports to fellow EU members face stiff competition from Italy and Spain.

EU-27 Exports of Peaches and Nectarines by Destination in MT

Country of Origin	MY 2006/07	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09
Russia	70,209	92,603	104,247
Switzerland	27,862	25,421	26,989
Ukraine	17,196	30,619	26,524
Norway	10,320	10,153	9,727
Croatia	8,019	7,138	7,001
Belarus	6,604	8,634	5,666
Others	23,766	19,542	15,937
TOTAL EXPORTS	163,976	194,110	196,091

Source: GTA

Production, Supply and Demand Data Statistics:

	2007			2008		2009	
Fresh Peaches &	2007/2008			2008/2		2009/2010	
Nectarines	Market Year Begin: Jan 2007			Market Year Begin: Jan 2008		Market Year Begin: Jan 2009	
EU-27 USDA Data			Now Boot	USDA Official Data	New Post		New Post
			Data		Data		Data
Area Planted			245,775		245,523		245,388
Area Harvested			231,375		230,951		230,888
Bearing Trees			0		0		0
Non-Bearing Trees			0		0		0
Total Trees			0		0		0
Commercial Production			4,049,534		4,083,541		4,192,111
Non-Comm. Production			0		0		0
Production			4,049,534		4,083,541		4,192,111
Imports			41,772		39,640		40,000
Total Supply			4,091,306		4,123,181		4,232,111
Fresh Dom. Consumption			3,220,820		3,291,484		3,397,808
Exports			194,110		196,091		190,000
For Processing			652,693		617,606		626,303
Withdrawal From Market			23,683		18,000		18,000
Total Distribution			4,091,306		4,123,181		4,232,111

Commodities:

Fresh Cherries, (Sweet&Sour)

Production

Cherry production in the main EU-27 producing countries is indicated below:

Major EU Cherry Producers by Volume in MT

COUNTRY	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09	MY 2009/10
Poland	128,000	240,000	225,000
Italy	106,189	134,905	115,000
Spain	75,700	62,900	86,700
Germany	63,209	40,077	62,500

Source: FAS Europe offices

Production of cherries in Poland in MY 2009/10 is estimated at 225,000 MT. Unfavorable spring weather conditions did not significantly damage the crop. Water was sufficient and temperatures were high. The only potential problem for this year's crop would be heavy rains that could potentially damage the fruit. Production this year

declined by 8 percent as a result of last year's very low prices. In 2007, production was very low due to frost, resulting in high prices. In 2008, production was unusually high and prices dropped dramatically. Consequently, production for 2009 has declined by 8 percent, reflecting very low 2008 prices.

Italian cherry production for MY 2009/10 is estimated at about 115,000 MT, a 15 percent decline over the previous year. This is mainly a result of adverse weather in certain areas of northern Italy where strong hail storms occurred just before harvest, affecting yields. In the south, intensive rains during flowering lowered final output.

The cherry crop in Italy has become marginal, relative to other tree crops, but production has stabilized, fluctuating only as a function of weather. About half of total production is sourced in Apulia (southern Italy), followed by Campania (southern Italy) and Veneto (northern Italy).

Spanish cherry production for MY 2009/10 is estimated at 86,700 MT, some 27 percent higher than the previous year. This positive result is largely due to the good crop harvested in the Aragon region, particularly in the province of Zaragoza.

In Spain, cherry harvesting takes place between the end of April through mid-August. The main producing regions are Extremadura and Aragon. The dominant varieties are: *Napoleon*, which is sold fresh and used for jams; *Ambrunesa*, which is a late variety with a crispy consistency and sweet taste; and, *Burlat*, an early harvested variety bearing a thick fruit with red, strong, juicy and sweet pulp. Some new varieties include *Starking*, *Lapins*, *Summit*, *Vittoria*, *Van* (California), *Picota* and *Sandy*. The sour varieties include *Richmond*, *Montmorency*, and *Morello*.

In Germany, total production for MY 2009/10 is forecast at 62,500 MT of which sweet cherries comprise 36,500 MT and tart cherries 26,000 MT. This is a substantial increase over the frost-stricken production of 2008. However, it is not clear at this time whether all tart cherries will be harvested, given low prices and competing demand for labor needed to harvest sweet cherries and plums.

While Germany's sweet cherry area has lingered around 5.5 million ha in recent years, the area for tart cherries has been declining from 4.2 million ha in 2002 to 2.8 million ha in 2009. This is a result of strong competition from other EU member states. According to German industry sources, the EU tart cherry production area is too large in relation to demand. In the current market environment, other MS with lower costs of production, such as Hungary and Poland, are more competitive than Germany. Production costs for processing tart cherries in Germany are 5 to 6 Euro/MT while the producer price at the beginning of the 2009 season was only 3.5 Euro/MT. As a result, farmers are expected to further reduce tart cherry area in the coming years.

Consumption

Consumption varies according to availability and price, and preferences vary greatly among MS. In countries such as Spain or Italy, domestic consumption is almost exclusively for fresh use, with minor amounts bought by the brining and processing industry.

In Germany, cherries are considered a seasonal product and stocked in supermarkets mainly during the German marketing season (July/August). Peaches, in contrast, are not widely grown in Germany but are stocked year-round. This explains the lower per capita consumption of cherries (2.4 kg) as compared to peaches (4 kg). Nonetheless, consumption of cherries is twice as high as for plums (1 kg).

External EU-27 imports are sourced from Turkey, the world's leading cherry producer. The main destinations for the major EU-27 producing countries are other Member states.

The use of tart cherries for processing is relatively stable at roughly 80 to 90 percent of domestic production. The majority of tart cherries are canned - over 80 percent - while the remainder finds its way into juice production. Processing of sweet cherries includes canning and distillation into spirits.

Trade

External EU-27 imports are sourced from Turkey, the world's leading cherry producer. The main destinations for the major EU-27 producing countries are other Member states.

Imports

As indicated in the table below, the main supplier of cherries to the EU is Turkey, the world's leading cherry producer. Drought and unfavorable conditions during blossoming resulted in a much-reduced 2008 crop, causing Turkish cherry exports to decline by nearly 50 percent.

The main EU importer of cherries is Germany, followed by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

EU-27 Imports of Cherries by Origin in MT

Country of origin	MY 2006/07	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09
Turkey	39,877	35,696	17,102
Chile	3,976	5,065	6,529
United States	4,498	5,425	4,197
Serbia	3,146	10,110	1,933
Argentina	1,719	1,504	1,510
Canada	1,246	1,386	831
Others	1,296	1,003	448
TOTAL IMPORTS	55,758	60,189	32,550

Source: GTA

Exports

The main destinations for EU-27 cherries are Russia, Belarus and Croatia. The largest EU-27 exporters with destinations beyond the EU in MY 2008/09 were Hungary (to Russia and Croatia), Poland (to Lithuania and Belarus) and Spain (very limited exports to Algeria and Russia). In MY 2008/09, EU-27 exports benefited from the dramatic decline in Turkish exports.

As in the case of peaches, the EU's major producers compete amongst themselves within the European market. Hungary is the major trader of (sour) cherries within Europe. The largest export market is Germany. Hungary's share of German cherry imports is about 25 percent. Austria and Russia are traditional buyers of Hungarian cherries but at much smaller volumes.

Poland is the second largest exporter of cherries. For 2009, conditions are better than in previous years. It is estimated that the export price should reach 1.5 PLN/kg (0.47 euro/kg). Spanish cherries are mainly destined for the United Kingdom and other EU countries.

EU-27 Exports of Cherries by Destination in MT

Country of Origin	MY 2006/07	MY 2007/08	MY 2008/09
Russia	16,129	6,824	20,711
Belarus	955	395	5,045
Croatia	400	121	2,478
Switzerland	1,691	994	1,472
Norway	680	520	459
Albania	280	173	308
Others	352	342	749
TOTAL EXPORTS	20,487	9,369	31,222

Source: GTA

Production, Supply and Demand Data Statistics

		2007		2008		2009	
	2007/2008		2008/2009		20	09/2010	
Fresh Cherries,(Sweet&Sour)		Market Year Begin: Jan 2007		Market Year Begin: Jan 2008		t Year Begin: an 2009	
EU-27	USDA Official Data	New Post	USDA Official Data	New Post	USDA Official Data	New Post	
		Data		Data		Data	
Area Planted		143,526		138,785		137,742	(HA)
Area Harvested		142,058		136,464		136,272	(HA)
Bearing Trees		0		0		0	(1000 TREES)
Non-Bearing Trees		0		0		0	(1000 TREES)
Total Trees		0		0		0	(1000 TREES)
Commercial Production		486,051		614,344		634,200	(MT)
Non-Comm. Production		0		0		0	(MT)
Production		486,051		614,344		634,200	(MT)
Imports		60,189		39,640		55,000	(MT)
Total Supply		546,240		653,984		689,200	(MT)
Fresh Dom. Consumption		360,978		366,860		401,510	(MT)
Exports		9,369		31,222		28,000	(MT)
For Processing		175,893		255,902		259,690	(MT)
Withdrawal From Market		0		0		0	(MT)
Total Distribution		546,240		653,984		689,200	(MT)

Policy

Stone Fruit

Common Market Organization for Fruits and Vegetables

Council Regulation 1182/2007, laying down specific rules to reform the Common Market Organization Reform (CMO) for fruit and vegetables (F&V), entered into force on January 1, 2008. This reform aims to improve the competitiveness and market orientation of the F&V sector and to bring this sector in line with others that have already been reformed under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Commission Regulation 1580/2007 lays down rules for implementation of the reform.

Producer Organizations (PO's) are the key elements in the EU's CMO for fruit and vegetables. PO's are legal entities established by producers to market commodities within the following categories: fruits and vegetables, citrus fruit, nuts, mushrooms, products intended for processing, and some cross-commodities.

EU subsidies are not paid to individual producers but are channeled through PO's. In order to qualify for EU subsidies, PO's must submit an operational program financed through an operational fund. The EU's financial contribution is paid directly into the PO's operational fund.

Imports into the EU of fresh fruit and vegetables are checked for compliance with EU-harmonized marketing standards. These standards apply at all marketing stages and include criteria such as quality, size, labeling, packaging and presentation.

For more information, please see GAIN report E48001.

Reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Under CAP reform, the EU moved away from production-related single area payments. However, MS could opt to keep some of the production-related payments in place for a transition period. In the fruit and vegetable sector this mostly refers to aid for processing. An "Overview of the implementation of direct payments under the CAP in Member States" can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/sfp/pdf/2008_01_dp_capFVrev.pdf

Withdrawal from Market Regime

The latest EU Common Market Organization Reform (CMO) for fruits and vegetables included changes to the "withdrawal from market" intervention scheme, whereby producer organizations may decide to withdraw some of their product from the market.

Under the reform, financing for the withdrawal of fruit is reduced from being 100 percent financed by the EU to 50 percent by the EU and 50 percent by the producer organization. Withdrawal procedures are supervised by the MS and the Commission. Withdrawn products which are not sold cannot return to the market under any circumstances. Such product must be distributed for free to charitable organizations, such as schools, hospitals and other institutions, distilled, used for animal feed or for non-food purposes, or destroyed in an environmentally sound manner. The Community will bear the cost of free distribution, including, in this case, sorting and packaging costs.

Reporting on the quantity of specific fruit withdrawn from the market will no longer be available. In Spain, for instance, the reporting of withdrawal data has been decentralized; each autonomous region is responsible for sending data to the national authorities. Information available at the national level will be based on total quantity of all commodities withdrawn from the market, not by individual product.

School Fruit Scheme

In November 2008, a political agreement was reached within the Agriculture Council on the Commission's proposal for an EU-wide scheme to provide fruits and vegetables to school children. European funding of €90 million per year will cover costs of the purchase and distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables in schools. This money will be matched by national and private funds in those MS which chose to make use of the program.

A key objective of the reform was to reverse the declining consumption of fruit and vegetables. Overall, the consumption of fruit and vegetables has been falling in the EU, but the situation is especially worrisome for children. Besides providing fruit and vegetables to a target group of schoolchildren, the scheme will require participating MS to set up strategies including educational and awareness-raising initiatives and the sharing of best practices. An estimated 22 million children in the EU are overweight. More than 5 million of these are obese and this figure is expected to rise by 400,000 every year.

The Council asked the Commission to come forward with a proposal for a European School Fruit Scheme based on an impact assessment of the reform of the CMO for Fruit and Vegetables which was adopted on July 8, 2008. Implementing rules have been published as well as the definitive allocation of community aid per MS. The scheme began in school year 2009/2010. The definitive allocation of Community aid per Member

State participating in the School Fruit Scheme is established for the period from 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010 in the Annex to a Commission Decision: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/fruitveg/sfs/documents/com09 5514 en.pdf

More information on the School Fruit Scheme is available at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/fruitveg/sfs/index_en.htm

Maximum Residue Level for Fruits

The maximum residue levels (MRLs) are being harmonized throughout the EU. For detailed up-to-date information, please visit: http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/pesticides.html

Certification of Plant Products

Unlike animal products, certification of plants and plant products is not harmonized within the EU. Phytosanitary certificates issued by an APHIS inspector are required to accompany fruit, vegetable and nut shipments. APHIS issues phytosanitary certificates in accordance with international regulations established by the International Plant Protection Convention of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. This standard-setting body coordinates cooperation between nations to control plant and plant product pests and to prevent their spread.

For an overview of EU mandatory and voluntary certificates, please visit: http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/certificates-overview.html

Council Directive 2000/29/EC contains provisions concerning compulsory plant health checks. The checks consist of documentary, identity and physical plant health checks to verify compliance with EU import requirements. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2000/L/02000L0029-20060210-en.pdf

Tariffs

Imports of fresh fruit and vegetables are subject to the *Entry Price System* (EPS) which has been in place in its current form since the Uruguay Round. It is a complex tariff system that provides a high level of protection to EU producers.

In this system, fruits and vegetables imported at or over an established entry price are charged an ad valorem duty only. Produce valued below the entry price are charged a tariff equivalent in addition to the ad valorem duty. The tariff equivalent is graduated for products valued between 92 and 100 percent of the entry price. The ad valorem duty and the full tariff equivalent are levied on imports valued at less than 92 percent of the entry price.

A study assessing the impact of changing the EPS is currently being conducted and the result of the impact assessment is expected by the end of this year. Whether or not the

EU will maintain the EPS will be discussed within the context of the Doha Round trade talks. The EPS is not necessarily discriminatory for the United States which tends to export high quality products. Thus, the goods arrive at a relatively high entry price and do not face any additional duty. Replacing the EPS with fixed tariffs could result in higher ad valorem duties.

Tariff levels for 2009 are published in EU regulation 1031/2008. For details please refer to:

http://eur-

lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:291:0001:0894:EN:PDF

Peaches and nectarines: see page 88

Cherries: see page 88

Marketing

EU Marketing Standards for Fruits and Vegetables

On July 1, 2009, <u>Commission Regulation 1221/2008</u> entered into force, providing a general marketing standard for all fresh fruits and vegetables and repealing specific marketing standards for 26 products, including cherries. For 10 types of fruit and vegetables, specific marketing standards will remain in place, including peaches and nectarines.

Fresh fruit and vegetable imports into the EU are checked for compliance with EU-harmonized marketing standards. These standards apply at all marketing stages and include criteria such as quality, size, labeling, packaging and presentation.

For detailed up-to-date information, please visit: http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/Fruit-Veg.html

Trade Shows

Trade shows in Europe offer excellent opportunities for U.S. exporters to make contact with potential clients or business partners from EU countries and other continents. The most important trade shows related to the fruit sector are:

Fruit Logistica

Berlin, Germany

Frequency: Every year

Web: http://www.fruitlogistica.de

Fruit Logistica is one of the most important trade shows for fresh and dried fruits in Europe. The next show will take place from **February 3-5, 2010.** More than 2,000 companies from across the entire fresh produce value chain will be present – including global players as well as small and medium-sized suppliers from all around the world.

Bio Fach

Nuremberg, Germany Frequency: Every year Web: http://www.biofach.de

Bio Fach is one of the most important trade shows for organic products in Europe. The next show will take place from **February 17-20, 2010.**

Other Relevant Reports:

Report Number	Title	Date Released
	EU-27 Reports	
USEU <u>E48108</u>	EU-27 EU Certification Guide	09/29/2009
USEU E49013	EU-27 Fruit & Vegetables : EU Marketing Standards	02/09/2009
USEU <u>E48001</u>	EU-27 Market Development Reports – Fruit and Vegetables	01/07/2008
	Member State Reports	
Poland PL8021	Stone Fruit Annual	06/25/2008
Spain SP8008	Stone Fruit Annual	05/28/2008
Italy <u>IT7012</u>	Stone Fruit Annual	05/31/2007

These reports can be accessed through website http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/ or through the FAS website http://www.fas.usda.gov/scriptsw/attacherep/default.asp